

WORLD'S LARGEST RECORD OFFICE

Stupendous Work Carried on by
Adjutant General.

HISTORY OF EVERY SOLDIER

Interesting Comparison Showing the
Increased Efficiency in Handling
Records Since Days of the Civil War
—Keep Track of Every Activity
Pertaining to Officers and Enlisted
Men in the United States Military
Forces.

Major Gen. Peter C. Harris, the adjutant general of the army, presides over the largest single record office in the world at Washington, D. C. There, under his direction, an army of 2,400 clerks, most of them young women, work day after day at their endless task of keeping track of every activity that pertains to officers and enlisted men in the United States military forces, keeping up a complete record of each and standing ready to supply information in reply to inquiries.

Filled away in the huge temporary buildings, which were constructed at the time of the World war, is as complete a word picture of the life of every soldier as the government could obtain. It is no exaggeration to say that the records of the World war today, thirty months after the signing of the armistice, are far more nearly complete than were those of the Civil war thirty years after its close. And it might be added that the work of the adjutant general's office at Washington is practically brought up to date, says the New York Times.

The value of this service to the many hundreds of thousands of mothers and fathers, wives, sweethearts and friends of soldiers who were or are still in the fighting forces of the nation is obvious. Information of the latest movements of every soldier is available and upon short notice information may be obtained concerning all that the War department may know, or deem it advisable to let be known, concerning every man who enlisted or was drafted for the World war.

Few of the soldiers are aware of the fact, but tucked away in one of the great buildings at Washington a young woman clerk watches day by day each happening in his life. Each of these women is the guardian of the record of 3,400 men under the present system. She carefully files away every letter or War department document that has to do with him.

With the end of the fiscal year the operations of the department are to be cut in half, as congress failed to grant an appropriation sufficient to maintain the present force.

Building Great Organization.
Perhaps the story of the assembling of this great organization is best told in General Harris's own words.

"Probably few realize," he said, "that the adjutant general's office in Washington is the largest single record office in the world."

"From the time of the War of the Revolution until 1889 the method of recording and indexing correspondence in the War office here underwent but little change. That method consisted in laboriously copying and indexing in longhand all incoming and outgoing communications. This was done in large and unwieldy volumes, known as letters received and letters sent books. There was an index to each book."

"In 1889 the record card system of recording correspondence was devised and adopted by the record and pension office, which was consolidated with the adjutant general's office in 1901. The system was a long step forward and enabled the adjutant general's office to function so expeditiously that it was not only able to handle without delay all current work, but to dispose of a large number of accumulated cases, many of which had remained in the office for over a year after their receipt. As a result of these changes the office operated satisfactorily through all the years leading up to the World war."

"But while the record card system was a vast improvement over the system that it succeeded, and provided an accurate and satisfactory method of handling a limited amount of correspondence, it was foreseen that it was not sufficiently elastic to meet the demands that would be made upon it by any great increase in the volume of correspondence such as was incident to the World war."

Grows By Strides.
"The total number of pieces of mail of all classes received in the adjutant general's office during the fiscal year 1916 was 925,000. The total number during the fiscal year 1919 was 87,616,242. For the year 1916, the daily average was 3,026 pieces and during 1919 it was 287,396 pieces. But this does not tell the whole story. From a daily average of approximately 80,000 pieces in July, 1918, the tide rapidly rose until it reached its flood with a daily average for the months in 1919 of 540,986. In other words the volume of work handled during the fiscal year 1919 was nearly ninety-five times as great as that handled during a normal year, and on several occasions during the months of May and June, 1919, the quantity of mail received in a single day approximated two-thirds of that received during the entire fiscal year ended June 30, 1919."

"The ability of the office to handle

such an enormous amount of work was due to the fact that it foresaw the conditions that would confront it and adopted new systems of record-making and record-keeping to meet those conditions.

"The first change made was in discarding the record card system of recording and filing correspondence and adopting the subjective decimal file system, which is based on the decimal system of library classification. This system met every contingency that arose during the war and there is no doubt that had this change not been made at the outbreak of the war the adjutant general's office would have failed to function."

Abolition of Muster Roll.

"This system, as modified and applied to the military records, brings together in the file the complete correspondence on any given general subject, so that on call you can readily get everything of record thereon. The personal correspondence relating to individual officers and enlisted men is filed in folders, a folder for each individual. The folders are arranged in the files alphabetically, and when you call for the folder of an individual you know you will get all personal correspondence relating to that individual. The great advantage of this system lies in the fact that no index is required in its operation."

"Prior to July 1, 1918, reports showing the duty and status of enlisted men were made to this office in the form of muster rolls, prepared bi-monthly. To obtain the complete military and medical record of a man who had served an enlistment it was necessary to examine eighteen to thirty muster rolls, depending upon whether his enlistment was for three or five years, each roll containing approximately seventy names, and to examine other records in various parts of the adjutant general's office."

"The plan of preparation of such records had undergone no material alteration since the Revolutionary war, though the experience of the Civil war had demonstrated that in order to make readily accessible the records of an individual whose military and medical history was to be found on various rolls and other records it was necessary to card all of the records; that is, to copy each entry on a separate card or slip and to assemble all those pertaining to any particular individual. The long search that was necessary proved to be time-consuming, unsatisfactory and economically impracticable."

"On July 1, 1918, the muster roll was abolished, and on that date the new method of reporting changes in the duty and station of officers and enlisted men was put into effect. These reports are made daily and are known as daily reports of changes. Upon receipt in the adjutant general's office they are filed with the other records of the men concerned, eliminating the expense incurred in carding the muster rolls and also making the most current information concerning the soldier immediately available."

"Beginning May 1, 1917, the service record also replaced what was known as the descriptive list. This record is opened for the soldier at the time of his enlistment and follows him throughout his entire service. When a soldier is discharged or otherwise separated from the service, his service record is closed and forwarded to the adjutant general of the army for file with his record as kept by the War department. While the organization record and the War department record are in many ways duplicates, each contains certain information not contained in the other."

"Tub Desk" Receipts.
General Harris explained that the records are now kept in what are known as "tub desks." The personal, military and medical records are thus segregated and consolidated individually. Normally one clerk operates two of these so-called tub desks containing the record of approximately 3,400 men."

"When a soldier is discharged, or otherwise separated from the service," continued General Harris, "we receive his service record, pay card and the report of physical examination, which, together with the other records, are placed in one container and finally removed to the file for men not in service."

"In this connection a comparison of the status of the work incident to the Civil war with that following the World war will show the great practical advantage of the present system over that which it superseded."

"On June 30, 1920, less than twenty months after the signing of the armistice, there were only 14,000 unanswered communications of all kinds in the entire adjutant general's office while the number of unanswered calls in one branch of the surgeon general's office in July, 1889, more than twenty-four years after the close of the Civil War, exceeded 40,000. The branch referred to afterward became the record and pension office, which was later consolidated with the adjutant general's office. In the division of this office, comparable with the branch of the surgeon's office referred to, there were but 9,500 calls for information unanswered on June 30, 1920, and, inasmuch as the daily receipts in that division averaged 6,000 and the daily output a little more than the receipts, it is evident that the work was practically current, and it is current today."

Rooster Picked Out Boy's Eye.
As Robert Hart, six years old, stooped over to pick up an ear of corn, a rooster in a flock of chickens which he was feeding pecked him in the eyeball and burst it, blinding

LAND SALE.

No. 461.

John J. Gore,
VS

W. H. Dudley.

In Chancery Court at Gainesboro, Tennessee.

In obedience to a decree of the Chancery Court at Gainesboro, Tenn., made in the above styled cause at the October term 1921, I will, on the 17th day of December, 1921, in front of the east door of the courthouse in Gainesboro, sell to the highest and best bidder, a one half undivided interest in the lands mentioned in the decree and described in the original bill as follows:

1st Tract. Lying and being in Talley's hollow, in 1st district of Jackson County, Tennessee, and bounded north by Lewis Pharris; on the east by the lands of J. L. Young; on the south by the second tract hereinafter described and on the west by the lands of R. C. Pharris, containing 60 acres, more or less, by estimation.

2nd Tract. Bounded on the north by the 1st tract hereinbefore described; on the east by the lands of Lewis Pharris; on the south by the lands of Lewis Pharris and Tom Tase; and on the west by the lands of Walter Rush and containing by estimation 60 acres.

Said land is sold as the property of W. H. Dudley, to pay a Judgement of \$1127.00 for purchase money and the cost of this cause, and sold subject to the life estate of Hiram Pharris in and to said land, and subject to certain purchase money notes as set out and referred to in the original bill of this cause.

TERMS OF SALE

Sale will be made within legal hours on a credit of six and twelve months, without the equity of redemption. The purchaser will be required to furnish personal security on said notes, and a lien will be retained on said land to further secure the same.

This November 23rd, 1921.

W. F. Sadler, C. & M.

C. C. Gore, Solicitor.

LAND SALE.

Jeff Reeves et al.

VS

Tom D. Jackson et al

In obedience to a decree of the Honorable Chancery Court for Jackson County, Tennessee, made at the October term, 1921, in the above styled cause, I will offer for sale for cash in hand on Saturday, December 17, 1921, the tract of land formerly sold in this case to A. Myatt and D. D. Allen, lying and being in the 13th civil district of Jackson County, Tennessee, beginning on an oak tree on the north side of Cumberland river, between the two "Bill Town" landings, the southwest corner of the old home tract of T. B. Lee, running due north to a stake on top of ridge with a marked line to William Spivey's fence; thence east with a marked line to the public road; thence with said road direction of Cumberland river to the top of bank or bluff of said river, a line made by W. D. McCain and D. N. Johnson; thence down said river with its meanders to the beginning, containing by estimation 35 acres, more or less.

This sale will take place at the east door of the courthouse in Gainesboro, Tenn., within legal hours, and is made to satisfy the unpaid purchase money on a former sale made in this case, and in this court.

This November 21, 1921.

W. F. Sadler, C. & M.

NON-RESIDENT NOTICE

P. P. Casetty

VS

J. C. Hackett et al

In Chancery Court at Gainesboro, Tenn.

It appearing from the bill filed in his cause, which is sworn to, that the Defendant J. M. Dean is a nonresident of the State of Tennessee, and cannot be served with the ordinary process of law:

It is ordered that said Defendant enter his appearance herein, before the Clerk and Master, at his office in the courthouse in Gainesboro, Tenn., on or before the third Monday in December 1921 next, and plead, answer, or demur to Complainant's bill, or the same will be taken for confessed as to him, and set for hearing ex parte; and that a copy of this order be published for four consecutive weeks in the Jackson County Sentinel, a newspaper published in Gainesboro, Tenn.

This 10th day of November, 1921.

W. F. Sadler, C. & M.

John J. Gore, Solr. for Compl.

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He'll get your still pots if he can,
And you'd better never run from him,
For he keeps them pistols in good trim.

I know a place where you can see.

A hole in the side of a sugar-tree.
That he put there with a forty four,
Which made the hills in echo roar.

Then there scattered on the ground,

The empty shells could all be found,

Some forty-five did the witness state.

Some forty-fours' and a thirty-eight.

Wild-catter, let me tell you,

The best thing you can do,

Is to hide your stills, destroy your malt,

And in this business call a halt.

For quicker than you tell the tale,

He'll land you in some Federal jail,

Or let your bondsmen sav you'll report,

At the next term of Federal court.

L. R.

Has Exciting Time Catching Big Bear.

H. H. Brown of White's Bend, was in the office Monday. Mr. Brown is in receipt of a letter from his brother, Luke, who owns and operates a ranch near Ringling, Montana, in which he relates some interesting happenings. About the most exciting one, however, was the capturing of a young bear on the ranch not long ago, and bringing it in home alive. A stunt, which he says is seldom pulled off in that country. He said the bear gave him a pretty stiff fight, but with the assistance of his pony and dog, he managed to lasso the rascal and drag him home alive.

When he came in home, he said his wife had become uneasy about him, and had about decided that the bear had devoured the whole outfit.

He states that the bear is about two years old, and is a splendid pet.

We would like to swap a years subscription to a small piece of that bear's ham, Luke. How about it?



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